

Mount Rainier National Park

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Winter Group Camping in the Paradise Area

Winter camping at Paradise is permitted when there is sufficient snow (generally December through April). It can be a wonderful experience, or it can bring discomfort or danger to your group. Plan ahead to make your winter camping experience safe and fun!

Required Permits

Parties of 13 to 100 must camp in one of the designated group camping areas at Paradise and **must pre-register**. Please call (360) 569-6003 (Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.) at least 2 weeks in advance. Provide group name, leader name, party size, date requested, and a call-back phone number. Your pre-registered permit will be available for pickup at the Longmire Museum (open daily 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., closed for lunch) on the day of your arrival to camp. If your plans change, please call to cancel or reschedule your outing. If you fail to cancel or reschedule, another group may be denied the opportunity to camp.

Driving within the Park

The road between Nisqually Entrance Station and Longmire is open 24 hours/day. The road from Longmire to Paradise is open in the winter during daylight hours when conditions are safe, and gated at dusk or when unsafe conditions exist.

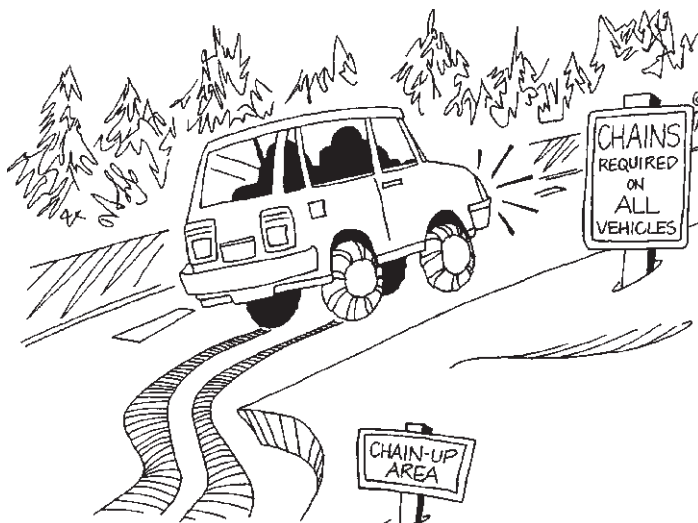
Keep in mind:

The gate will not be opened until conditions are safe. Although we try to have it open for travel by 9 a.m. daily, heavy snowfall or high avalanche danger frequently delays opening. If you arrive early be prepared to wait in the parking lot at Longmire until the gate is opened. Do not park in the road by the gate—use the parking lots. Be aware that high avalanche danger may prevent the road from opening.

The road downhill from Paradise to Longmire will be opened each morning after plowing is complete. There is no gate at Paradise. Do not begin your downhill journey until you have contacted a ranger to verify that the road is open.

Make sure you're properly equipped before leaving home.

- ___ Tire chains. Have you practiced putting them on?
- ___ Extra food and fuel for car and stove, in case you have to stay out an extra night.
- ___ Test your stove. Is the fuel tank full?
- ___ Trash bags for trash and wet clothing.
- ___ Clothing and footwear which provides warmth, even if wet.
- ___ Have a responsible contact person who knows when to expect you back home.



The road between Longmire and Paradise will likely be snow-covered. State law requires that **all** vehicles must carry tire chains in the mountains during winter. The following restrictions may go into effect at any time for vehicles travelling on park roads:

**APPROVED
TRACTION TIRES
ADVISED**

Traction tires include all weather radials with a mud and snow rating, snow tires, or studded snow tires.

**CHAINS
REQUIRED
EXCEPT 4WD**

Chains must be applied to the drive wheels. 4WD/AWD vehicles need not apply chains, but must carry them.

**CHAINS
REQUIRED
ALL VEHICLES**

All vehicles must apply chains on drive wheels.

Overnight Parking

Carpool whenever possible since overnight parking space is limited. Park only in designated overnight parking areas at Longmire, Cougar Rock, Paradise, or Narada Falls. Cars parked outside of designated areas are hazardous to snow plow drivers and may be buried by plowed snow. Check with a park ranger for overnight parking locations when you get your permit.

Stay out of the parking lots and well away from them while the snow plows and snow blowers are working. Plow operators cannot see pedestrians easily and cannot stop quickly. Snowblowers throw blocks of snow and ice 300 feet. Stay away from snow blasts!



Snow Camping at Paradise

Snow camping is permitted in the immediate Paradise area (lower Deadhorse Creek Basin, Guide House group camping, and the area behind Paradise Inn. Camping in vehicles is allowed **only** at Sunshine Point Campground.

Groups of more than 12 people *must* camp in the immediate Paradise area. If the road to Paradise does not open due to hazardous conditions, groups may camp at Sunshine Point or Cougar Rock campgrounds only. Ask a park ranger for options.

Groups of more than 12 people should use the restrooms in the upper parking lot, open 24 hours. If that is not feasible, groups must use the 'blue bag' system to dispose of human waste. Obtain blue bags from the ranger station or visitor center. Special barrels for blue bag waste (marked "blue bags") are located inside the restroom tunnel at Paradise. Never drop blue bags in trash cans!

Low Impact Camping

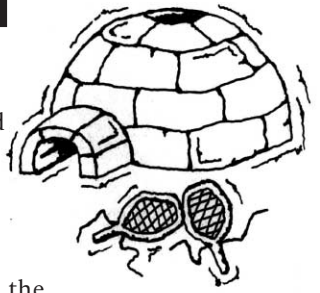
Site selection: Look for deep snow drifts along sloping terrain; this will help prevent damage to plants or trees buried in the snow pack. Do not cut or damage plants or trees while digging a snow shelter. Be responsible for carrying out **everything** you packed in.

Do not feed animals. Wild animals have become accustomed to finding food at camp sites, but they need natural food to remain healthy. Secure your trash and food containers, and keep your camp clean.

Blue bags for human waste can be obtained from the ranger station or visitor center. Using blue bags requires maturity and a commitment to protecting the park. When you use blue bags with your group, please explain carefully how to use them and why: blue bag use helps keep water pure, protects fragile vegetation from digging, and allows more people to use the wilderness without impacting it. *You are responsible for properly disposing of human waste.*

Remember:

Camp at least 300' from any plowed road, parking lot, marked route, trail, or building and 100' from water sources.



For resource protection and safety, the maximum group size is 100 people.

Snow camping at Paradise is **prohibited** until there is at least 5' of snow on the ground. It's recommended that there be at least 8' of snow at Paradise before snow caves are constructed in order to prevent damage to ground cover, shrubs, and trees around Paradise. Collapse your snow caves and igloos before you leave camp: no one wants to be injured by falling into a deep hole left by careless campers.

Sledding and sliding is permitted only in the Paradise Snowplay Area. Tree wells, trees, and unexpected cliffs make the rest of the park hazardous.

Never walk or ski on the road. Snow plows work overnight and early in the morning. Slippery surfaces and the possibility of avalanche make the roads unsafe for pedestrians at any time.

Pets are not permitted outside of the parking areas, and must be leashed whenever they are outside of your vehicle.

Do not dry clothing and gear in the restrooms or the Jackson Visitor Center. **Bring extra plastic bags for wet clothing**, then clean and dry it at home.

Do not camp or cook in any building or in the restroom tunnel.

Wood and charcoal fires are **not** permitted.

Collecting or gathering of wood, rocks, plants or other park resources is prohibited. Never cut or break branches off trees.

In case of emergency, dial 911

Phones are located in the tunnel leading to the 24-hour restroom in the upper parking lot at Paradise, at the Cougar Rock Campground Registration board, at the National Park Inn at Longmire, and on the porch of the Nisqually Entrance Station.

THE "10 ESSENTIALS"



- map of the area
- compass & altimeter
- extra food & water
- first aid kit
- flashlight, extra batteries & bulb
- sunglasses & sunscreen
- pocketknife
- extra clothing & rain gear
- emergency shelter
- matches in a waterproof container

"LEAVE NO TRACE"

- plan ahead & prepare
- travel & camp on durable surfaces
- dispose of waste properly
- leave what you find
- respect wildlife
- be considerate of other visitors

